

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/681,391

Examiner

Igor N. Borissov

Applicant(s)

BYRNE ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Request for Continued Examination (RCE) of 4/10/2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-9 and 13-43.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment/Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 4/10/2007 has been entered.

Response to Amendment

Amendment received on 4/10/2007 is acknowledged and entered. Claims 10-12 and 44-45 have been canceled. Claims 2, 13, 19, 23, 29, 36, 40 have been amended. Claims 1-9, and 13-43 are currently pending in the application.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 103 have been withdrawn due to the applicant's amendment.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a personal interview with an applicant's representative Daniel M. Fitzgerald (Reg. No.: 38,880) on Monday, April 16, 2007.

The application has been amended as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

- 19. (cancelled).
- 20. (cancelled).
- 21. (cancelled).
- 22. (cancelled).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-9, 13-18 and 23-43 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

As per independent claims 1, 13, 19, 23, 29, 36, 40, the best prior art Coons et al. (US 6,832,250) in view of Heinemann et al. (US 6,882,986) teaches a method, system, and a computer-readable medium having computer-readable instructions embedded therein for implementing said method for remotely monitoring the usage of office equipment, said method including receiving data related to equipment usage at the remote location, processing said data, and generating a report regarding received data, and further comprising: inputting into the remote computer system meter data relating to equipment usage, said data including identification of the equipment; generating an export file by processing the meter data at the remote computer system, the export file including a plurality of data records; applying business logic rules at the local computer system to control the functionality of the system; generating reports concerning the usage data collected; transmitting an invoice for payment by the customer for usage of the equipment, and further comprising providing a set of rules for validating the aggregated invoices, said validation is conducted to detect any errors

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contained in the invoices, to prepare an electronic file including data identifying said errors and data being indicative of measures taken to correct the error.

However, Coons et al. in view of Heinemann et al. fails to disclose or suggest applying validation rules to an export file at a local computer system to determine the data records included within the export file that satisfy the validation rules wherein one of the applied validation rules determines whether data representing an amount of usage of a piece of equipment included within the corresponding export file is invalid. Further, Coons et al. in view of Heinemann et al. fails to disclose or suggest that said error report identifies the data records that violate at least one of the validation rules due to at least one of a processing error at the local computer system and an inputting error at the remote computer system.

The best foreign art, Bickford et al. (EP0360511 A2) appears to disclose a method and system for billing customers for energy usage, wherein a system status error log is maintained. However, Coons et al. in view of Heinemann et al. fails to disclose or suggest applying validation rules to an export file at a local computer system to determine the data records included within the export file that satisfy the validation rules wherein one of the applied validation rules determines whether data representing an amount of usage of a piece of equipment included within the corresponding export file is invalid. Further, Coons et al. in view of Heinemann et al. fails to disclose or suggest that said error report identifies the data records that violate at least one of the validation rules due to at least one of a processing error at the local computer system and an inputting error at the remote computer system.

The remaining dependent claims are considered allowable, as they are dependent and based off of an allowable independent claims.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

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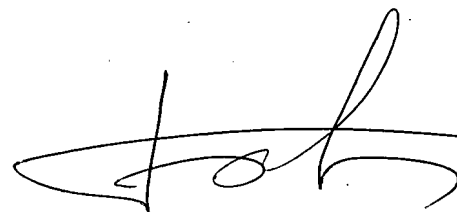
accompany the issue fee. Such submission should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reason for Allowance".

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Igor Borissov whose telephone number is 703-305-4649. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss can be reached on 703-308-2702. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

IB
4/16/2007

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Igor N. Borissov', with a stylized, flowing script.

IGOR N. BORISSOV
PRIMARY EXAMINER